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Liberty

NOT THE DAUGHTER BUT THE MOTHER OF ORDER — PROUDHON

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"For always in thine eyes, O Liberty!
Shines that high light whereby the world is saved;
And though thou slay us, we will trust in thee."

JOHN HAY.

On Picket Duty.

Three dollars will buy a bound volume of "The Transatlantic." It contains an equivalent of twelve hundred octavo pages of reading matter by the best writers of the world. See advertisement in another column.

John B. Barnhill (post-office address, Xenia, Illinois) is preparing a primer of sociological literature. Any pertinent contributions or suggestions will be thankfully received by him. Above all, the compiler will endeavor to do full justice to all the social "creeds," especially in respect to the literature which each presents. To this end he requests all who may read this to send him a list of what they consider the "Ten (or more) Best Books" on social reform. Two separate lists might be prepared, one to include the most *instructive* works, the other the most *inspiring*. Request is also made for such observations with respect to the particular value and service found in each book as might prove helpful to other students.

The plan proposed by Mr. Donisthorpe in the "Herald of Anarchy" for the organization of a league to resist by force the State's aggressions does not materially differ from that which the Anarchists have always had in view. But it is worse than useless to attempt to carry it out before acquiring the requisite strength. Mr. Donisthorpe's plan presupposes the existence of a hundred active, resolute, determined, not-to-be-frightened Anarchists in the town where it is attempted. I think that one hundred is too small a number to insure success, but in what town of England or America can even that number be found? I am afraid, after all, that education must be our sole method for some time yet. It must be admitted, however, that Mr. Donisthorpe is doing much by his works to establish his faith. It appears from a statement just published by him, with which I shall soon favor Liberty's readers, that he, all alone, has been forcibly and successfully resisting the Free Library tax in England for several years.

Those who read the articles of Tak Kak, J. K. Ingalls, and William Hanson, in this issue, will see that I am not as lonesome as I was. Judging from developments thus far, the outlook is that the line of division on the copyright question, so far as believers in liberty are concerned, will coincide pretty closely with that which separates Individualism of the ordinary type from Anarchistic Socialism. The Individualists, who do not see the close connection between denial of competition and usury (Proudhon, by the way, shows perpetual copyright to be a form of usury), and who, though valuing liberty, do not see in it a solution of the labor question, will be found, almost to a man, on the side of copyright; the Anarchistic Socialists, who look upon monopolies in the economic sphere as the most serious violations of Individualism, will be found nearly unanimous in opposition to copyright. Not a single Anarchistic Socialist, so far as I know, has as yet publicly signified approval of the position taken by Mr. Yarros and Mr. Simpson. A few, as mistaken as themselves, may appear later, but the sentiment of the Anarchists as a body will remain that of consistent antagonism to usury in all its forms. The attitude of the Individualists is what one would naturally expect, but that of Mr. Yarros and Mr. Simpson, who in other respects are Anarchistic Socialists, is an anomaly. For my own part I regard their support of literary monopoly as really, though not as seriously, a departure from Anarchism as though they had supported the banking monopoly. Of course this is only my personal opinion, which leaves them the same liberty to regard me as a wanderer from the faith because I oppose copyright. But it must be remembered that I am only saying what I have always said, reiterating a thing which I have steadily put forward as an essential of the Anarchistic programme, and heretofore without any sign of protest from them; whereas they are suddenly denying that to which they have heretofore given at least the consent of silence. And those who know Mr. Yarros and Mr. Simpson and their well-established reputation as prompt "kickers" (I do not use the word in an odious sense) will allow that especially where they are concerned it is fair to assume that silence gives consent. In fact, I have had every reason to believe, until within a very few weeks, that they were as earnest opponents of copyright as myself.

J. K. Ingalls is "unable to see how credit based on a legalized monopoly can benefit such as have no interest in the monopoly, or save them from rent, tariff, and patent right tax." Mr. Ingalls seems to be under the impression that money benefits only those to whom it is issued. This is not the case. Whenever an honest and capable business man gets credit, the whole community is benefited, because the tendency of the resulting extension of business is to raise wages and lower prices. And this will remain true whatever the basis of the credit, provided that basis has sufficient value in it to redeem the obligation if necessary. As to ground rent, tariffs, and royalties, I have never claimed that free money will abolish them, but that these result from separate monopolies, all of which must be abolished. Still I think that free money would have a tendency to diminish ground rent by lessening concentration in cities, and would lead to free foreign trade by depriving the protectionists of their only good argument, — that, in the absence of an abundance of money, importation should be discouraged in order to keep the little money that there is from leaving the country.

The Philadelphia "Press" prides itself on being a "stalwart" Republican organ. Its fidelity to tariffs, banking monopolies, and other manifestations of the spirit of protectionism, is above suspicion. In the light of these considerations the following extract from that paper's editorial columns, valuable and significant in itself, becomes doubly significant and interesting. "The money order system which has been introduced by the United States Express Company promises to be a great public convenience," says the "Press." "In Chicago it is applied to the payment of gas bills without running to a distant gas office. There are in that city a hundred offices where the gas bills can be paid. The arrangement is entered into between the gas company and the express company and the agents are authorized to receipt the gas bills and attach thereto a money order. Arrangements have been made in Philadelphia between the Receiver of Taxes and the United States Express Company whereby the former agrees to receive in payment of taxes the money orders of the United States Express. This company has established sixty offices in Philadelphia for the sale of these money orders, and it will be a matter of great convenience to the residents of the city. The fact is that money can be sent by express money orders at much less expense, bother, and delay than by postal orders. This money order of the United States Express Company is nothing less than a bank draft, and in security and negotiability corresponds to a cashier's draft, with the United States Express Company and its numerous agents as the bank. These money orders can be cashed at 15,000 express offices. Banking institutions take them like currency, since, unlike postal orders, they are negotiable anywhere. No blank application has to be filled out by the purchaser; no waiting for a letter of advice on the part of the recipient of the order. Besides the order itself, you get a receipt; the order you forward by mail, and the receipt you keep as an absolute guarantee against loss." The "Press" concludes with this reflection: "It is the constant introduction of conveniences like this that marks the steady advance of modern civilization." Doubtless the "Press" would be much surprised to hear that the facts it states with such satisfaction constitute a most potent practical argument against all government monopoly, and especially against the postal monopoly; but to many less stalwart Republicans this, it is hoped, will not be difficult to understand.

"Give Us More Law."

As there can be no question that all the deviltry and oppression from which the people at large now suffer is sustained by — as it springs from — statute law, the question is respectfully submitted to our law-makers now in Topeka, if they can do any better work this year than to give us a dozen or so brief and pointed repealing acts. What folly can be greater than to clothe men by law with power to rob, and then to endeavor to make laws to regulate and restrict the exercise of the power to rob? The lines given below are as applicable to Kansas as to her northern neighbor, for whose benefit they were written, and published in a Republican paper, while the Republican party had undisputed control of the State government.

There came to the city a Statesman of Beauty,
The beer on his whiskers was heavy and chill;
He never ceased talking of honor and duty,
And every half hour he rung in a new bill.
His mouth made one think of a vast flowing river,
That rolled on its course to the ocean forever;
He made the wall paper curl up there and quiver,
And shouted the watchword of "Give us more law!"

He rung in a bill to prohibit school teachers
From shooting the children while they were at play;
Another restraining all pastors and preachers
From taking collections six times a day.
Another to make it a grave misdemeanor
To make a wire bustle act as a calf-weaner;
And, while he thus monkeyed, State coffers grew leaner,
And still came the slogan of "Give us more law!"

He asked that a law be enforced for protection
Of soldiers who fought in the Crimean war;
That men be appointed to make an inspection
Of Jupiter, Venus, and some other star.
He thought the State needed a State pump inspector,
That saloon-keepers cut down the price of their nectar:
And so rambled on this political Hector,
And howled the brave anthem of "Give us more law!"

I weep briny tears for poor old Nebraska,
Whose back is sore burdened with laws that are made.
I'd ship all the statesmen in bulk to Alaska,
Or where the heat's two billion high in the shade;
And then, when the last one from us had been driven,
We'd dwell in this country, the fairest 'neath heaven,
And see that their past sins were pardoned, forgiven,
And boycott the anthem of "Give us more law!"

Proudhon, the Father of Anarchism.

HIS PERSONALITY AND HIS PHILOSOPHY.

[From Dr. S. Englander's "Abolition of the State."*]

The State belongs to empiricism, he therefore regards its abolition as a matter of experience.

Such an impulse to shake off the State gets possession of his soul that he scarcely leaves himself time to find abstract grounds for it, but brings before us single examples of no-State as a reality.

The negation of the State, which not only destroys but also at the same time creates, is the only rational one. By every other means we run our heads against a prison wall, and believe we are thereby achieving our liberty. While to most men the abolition of the State is synonymous with nothingness, Proudhon sees so clearly the bright picture of a society without any form of State, that he complains of not being a painter or a mechanician, in order to represent it in its entirety.

With him Anarchy is not blank despair in the State, nor does it possess a sweet mystical charm to hurl itself into an unknown void; whereas many men who preach after him do not grasp this deep sense, and are only charmed at having discovered a vocal expression for their dull impulse towards suicide, and to be able to translate their pollution and dissolution into the ideal.

The doctrine of the abolition of the State has a something terrible, synonymous with madness, for sober practical men who love law and order; but for those who have lost themselves, who live without object or aim, and hate forms, it has a charm. While the one set of men see in the no-State theory the impossibility of realizing their active healthy impulse for achievements, to the others the general dissolution and decay are especially welcome. They feel their own death-agony, and rejoice to carry with them this world full of pulsating glorious power. This struggle seems to them only the natural vocation of life and the world; in their slothful egotistical nothingness, they cheer on the new prophet of anarchy and the abolition of the State, just as once ignorant weak minds accepted the doctrine of community of goods and wives.

But Proudhon is as little understood by these friends as by his other enemies. In this branch of his criticism he still remains the cold, impassive book-keeper; he calculates the State to its death, even as he throttled capital with figures. He addresses those of his readers whom he regards as unbelievers, before he proceeds to demonstrate the possibility of abolishing the State, thus: "My development can only let matters follow one upon another, and not present everything at once. How, therefore, shall we be able to grasp the entirety? What guarantee shall we have for our constitution? This guarantee, I will name it. It is so simple that every one can prove its accuracy. It consists of a mathematical expression. 'All the parts together equal the whole.' Reader, do you believe in mathematics? If so, you can entrust yourself entirely to my guidance. I will show you the most interesting things, and you run no danger of losing yourselves. By aid of this expression I hope to show you the real unheard-of play, that government by the progress of social reforms necessarily falls, and in proportion as it falls must order take its place."

Thus, as he raises his axe to shatter the State, he calls out to his readers to help him count the broken fragments, and from their number to conclude that the whole still exists in the total amount of the pieces. It is as if during doomsday he geometrically calculated the downfall of the world.

This cold, sober habit of destruction, passionless as that of an executioner, enabled him to reason out the extinction of the State; and we are thereby pacified that in the loss of the State nothing will be really lost, because this eternal calculator certainly took everything into account.

Proudon was so sure that he asked, "What shall we do the day after the Revolution?" He was so certain that he mocks and gibes at the Socialist writers with their quack-salver remedies, and at the Mountain, with its idea gathered from the National Convention, that "the people are the starting-point of all government, that for the last time they have to carry on the Government in order to end the Revolution in twenty-four hours by decrees."

He would have strangled the State with its own hands, with laws, and have commenced the kingdom of Anarchy with well-considered decrees. His departure out of the State was therefore no act of fever or precipitation, of satiety and eccentricity, of aimlessness, of want of a definite idea, but it is the sober result of the conviction that we had not yet ended the Revolution, that every revolution must negate and clear away something, and that two things especially were to be denied and cleared away — the exhaustion of humanity by capital, and oppression by the State; on this double negation depended the regeneration of society.

We are so accustomed to Governments and States, that we regard human society as a State, and consider the negation of the State as synonymous with utter dismemberment and isolation. Many persons might therefore define Proudhon's idea of the abolition of the State, that every one should be for himself and by himself, and no one should trouble himself about his neighbor. Yet man is only free by means of his neighbor; he is only happy by means of his neighbor. This is the mystical human view of existence. It was this mighty impulse which animated Leonidas at Thermopylæ, and which drove the Parisians to storm the Bastile.

Rightly, then, did Proudhon discriminate between simple and compound liberty. The first only exists among barbarians, and even only among civilized nations, so long as they alone feel free when isolated. In this way he is the freest whose activity is least restrained by other men. A single man alone upon the wide earth would represent the highest grade of this liberty.

Against this sterile liberty, brooking no witnesses, Proudhon took up the social standpoint, and in it found liberty and solidarity so synonymous that the liberty of one man is not bounded by the liberty of another man, as was expressed in the Declaration of Rights in 1793, but rather finds therein an ally, and he is the freest man who is most closely connected with his equals.

He exemplifies this by two nations separated from each other by an arm of the sea or a chain of mountains. These nations are comparatively free so long as they have no intercourse with each other; but they are poor; they are simply free. But they are far freer and richer if they interchange their products. This is called compound liberty. The special activity of these two nations acquired greater scope when they mutually exchange articles of consumption and labor. "This simple fact," says Proudhon, "reveals to us an entire system of new developments of liberty, a system in which the exchange of produce is but the first step." With these words he alluded to his "People's Bank."

Proudhon, therefore, did not despair of civilization. He did not regard it as the misfortune of mankind, and would not allow the citizens to slink back to the woods. The abolition of the State did not appear to him as a hostile isolation of mankind. What he wanted was the State without government, without tutelage; the perfect free right of each single individual who in his fellows finds his completeness and progress, the self-administration and self-government of all members of society. He did not want that every mouthful we eat should be first chewed by the teeth of an official. All the countless supports which the State has erected to save us from falling, but which finally form prison bars, he would have cleared away — the cessation of all protection by the State, which makes us cowardly and drowsy — and in their places self-protection; then would liberty, equality, and fraternity become a reality.

In every society Proudhon distinguished two kinds of constitution — the social and the political. The abolition of the latter was with him synonymous with abolition of the State. As an example of a social constitution, Proudhon brought forward the Ten Commandments which Moses gave to the Jews. Those, and the accompanying laws which regulate religious ceremonies and lay down police and sanitary regulations, form no political constitution. The theocratic form of government which the national bond assumed, but which under Samuel led to the establishment of a kingdom, did not at first at all take the character of a political organization because religion and science were synonymous.

* Continued from No. 177.

Our Overworked Socialistic Post-Office.

[Freethought.]

A good feature, potentially, of the postal service introduced by the Hon. Samuel W. Backus, postmaster of San Francisco, is the fifty or more large boxes placed at different points for the reception of newspapers and packages. One of these boxes is located at the corner of Fourth and Howard streets, within a long stone's-throw of this office, and, as soon as it was put in place a few weeks ago, we began to patronize it. All went well for awhile, and scores of copies of our premium book have been deposited, but now complaint comes from Mr. Backus to the effect that we are overtaxing the service. The writer says his attention has been called to the fact that we are in the habit of placing large quantities of mail matter in the boxes designed for newspapers and packages, which is true, and "using this privilege so freely as to deprive other citizens of the uses for which such boxes were designed." Mr. Backus says he is sure that upon reflection we will agree with him that this liberal use of these boxes by the Freethought Publishing Company works an injustice to the community at large.

It seems to us that Postmaster Backus takes a wrong view of the case, for it is not the Freethought Publishing Company, but "the community at large," that is accommodated by our liberal use of the mails.

This company is not to be held responsible for the inadequacy of the postal service. A firm with fifty pounds of matter to be mailed has as much right to the use of the box as one man with a single letter or book; for in the latter case but two persons are concerned,—the sender and the receiver,—while in the former case fifty or a hundred may be involved,—the sender and the many to whom the different packages are addressed. Supposing we fill the box so full that the man with a paper to mail cannot deposit it; does not Mr. Backus see how much easier it will be for the latter to carry his newspaper to the main office than for us to pack fifty pounds the same distance?

If any complaint is due the postmaster is not the one to make it. When a postal box becomes too small for the demand upon it, the box should be enlarged, not the traffic restricted. The man who collects from these boxes may as well collect twenty pounds of mail as ten, and the boxes may as well be made large enough to hold all the matter likely to be deposited in them. We have entered into correspondence with the postmaster for the purpose of learning how much or how little mail we may be allowed to deposit in his new receptacle. If we must deposit one book and carry forty to the main office, Mr. Backus is at liberty to take his red box away.

Rights as a Basis of Generalization.

[Sydney Olivier in National Reformer.]

Positive moral science, in "balancing accounts between clashing egoisms," does no more than declare *limitations* to the rights of individuals by pronouncing certain activities and mental habits "wrong," because their exercise interferes with the happiness of other individuals, or, as I should prefer to say, with their freedom. It does not say, or attempt to say, what is the full content of the "rights" of the individual, even when we have him under consideration as a member of society. Still less is it capable of declaring what are the rights of the individual *qua* atomic Man, and without reference to society. Mr. Robertson makes bold to say that *homo pithecus* "certainly believed he had rights." This seems to me most improbable, and the only analogies we have to guide us are unfavorable to the supposition. It depends very much on whether he was gregarious or not. Assuming him not to have been gregarious, I see no more reason for attributing the notion to him than to a modern tiger, or other creature independent of society. His own desires would be the direct prompters of his actions, and the limit of his actions would be the limit of his powers. If his actions were frustrated, he would be angry, but angry because baulked of his desire, not because baulked of his rights. To his rights we ourselves can affix no limit; they are indefinite, and appear as co-extensive with his desires. For we need not call him to account for the murder and destruction of plant life for his food, or even for that of a few beetles or bees' nests, although he has not the excuse which the book of Genesis gives us for the torture, oppression, and slaughter of all living races but our own. His rights, I say, are indefinite; they are anything he pleases, and positive science cannot possibly tell us anything about them. But if, or when, he is gregarious, then his freedom of action becomes limited by the requirements of social cohesion. He is prevented from doing some things that he desires to do, and comes to recognize that it is more convenient that he should not do them. If his fellows further interfere with him, he resents it, but surely we have gone far towards civilization before it can be said that he resents it as an infraction of his right rather than as a hindrance of his will. But even at this stage, and right up to our present society, the rights of individuals, within the bounds set by social convenience, remain indefinite. Each isolated wild beast, including hypothetically *homo pithecus*, each horde of wolves, each savage tribe, each conquering nation of history, and, until the new revelation of evolution, Man as a genus, have surely regarded their rights as against all the world as limited only by their powers, or rather, have not entertained the notion of rights until they found their freedom limited.

And as in a world of anarchic atomism the "natural" rights of the individual cannot be detected or defined, and are thus not material for handling by positive science, so in the modern state the "natural" rights of the individual, being an indefinite and immeasurable residuum, circumscribed by conventions of *social* right, founded on the common convenience, are just as unsatisfactory material for positive treatment, and quite as fallacious a basis for ethical or political generalization. We can do no more than assume that it is good for every man to have freedom,—*i. e.*, to be able to realize his desires to the fullest extent,—and to build our ethical generalizations and our legislative structure on this assumption in such a fashion as will promote the greatest amount of freedom in society. This is positive Utilitarianism, and is independent of any reference to "rights."

In a Far-Off World.

[Olive Schreiner in "Dreams."]

There is a world in one of the far-off stars, and things do not happen here as they happen there.

In that world were a man and woman; they had one work, and they walked together side by side on many days, and were friends — and that is a thing that happens now and then in this world also.

But there was something in that star world that there is not here. There was a thick wood: where the trees grew closest, and the stems were interlocked, and the summer sun never shone, there stood a shrine. In the day all was quiet, but at night, when the stars shone or the moon glinted on the tree tops, and all was quiet below, if one crept here quite alone and knelt on the steps of the stone altar, and uncovering one's breast, so wounded it that the blood fell down on the altar steps, then whatever he who knelt there wished for was granted him. And all this happens, as I said, because it is a far-off world, and things often happen there as they do not happen here.

Now the man and woman walked together, and the woman wished well to the man. One night when the moon was shining so that the leaves of all the trees glinted, and the waves of the sea were silvery, the woman walked alone to the forest. It was dark there; the moonlight fell only in little flecks on the dead leaves under her feet, and the branches were knotted tight overhead. Farther in it got darker, not even a fleck of moonlight shone. Then she came to the shrine; she knelt down before it and prayed; there came no answer. Then she uncovered her breast; with a sharp two-edged stone that lay there she wounded it. The drops dripped slowly down on to the stone, and a voice cried, "What do you seek?"

She answered, "There is a man; I hold him nearer than anything. I would give him the best of all blessings."

The voice said, "What is it?"

The girl said, "I know not, but that which is most good for him I wish him to have."

The voice said, "Your prayer is answered; he shall have it."

Then she stood up. She covered her breast and held the garment tight upon it with her hand, and ran out of the forest, and the dead leaves fluttered under her feet. Out in the moonlight the soft air was blowing, and the sand glittered on the beach. She ran along the smooth shore, then suddenly she stood still. Out across the water there was something moving. She shaded her eyes and looked. It was a boat; it was sliding swiftly over the moonlit water out to sea. One stood upright in it; the face the moonlight did not show, but the figure she knew. It was passing swiftly; it seemed as if no one propelled it; the moonlight's shimmer did not let her see clearly, and the boat was far from shore, but it seemed almost as if there was another figure sitting in the stern. Faster and faster it glided over the water away, away. She ran along the shore; she came no nearer it. The garment she had held close fluttered open; she stretched out her arms, and the moonlight shone on her long loose hair.

Then a voice beside her whispered, "What is it?"

She cried, "With my blood I bought the best of all gifts for him. I have come to bring it him! He is going from me!"

The voice whispered softly, "Your prayer was answered. It has been given him."

She cried, "What is it?"

The voice answered, "It is that he might leave you."

The girl stood still.

Far out at sea the boat was lost to sight beyond the moonlight sheen.

The voice spoke softly, "Art thou contented?"

She said, "I am contented."

At her feet the waves broke in long ripples softly on the shore.

Glad Tidings from Over Sea.

My dear friend Tucker:

I have long remained silent, and only today the hour has come for me to tell you why.

Perhaps you will remember that I told you in those for me memorable days of the summer of 1889, when I made your acquaintance, that for more than a year I had been occupied with the preparations of an extensive work on the movement of Anarchism, and that before its completion I neither could nor would entertain the thought as to how far I might be able to henceforth work for the spread of our ideas in the German-speaking countries of Europe.

Often my hand itched after the pen when I saw how here almost more than anywhere else the teachings of Anarchism were covered with the impenetrable mists of prejudice. But I forced myself to do the one thing before the other, for I know that he who would accomplish something must not do everything at once.

The circumstance that a second edition of my "Sturm" had become necessary, gave me, meanwhile, an opportunity for dispelling all doubt as to the position I occupy, by the addition of twelve new poems; and the attacks by Socialists and Communists upon the thus enlarged edition of my book have quieted my fears lest I might still be misunderstood in these circles.

The work of which I have just been speaking was placed in the hands of the printers today, and will appear, I hope, in April of this year. It bears the title: "Die Anarchisten. Kulturgemälde aus dem Ende des XIX. Jahrhunderts." (The Anarchists. A Picture of Civilization at the Close of the Nineteenth Century), and will be published by J. Schabelitz of this place.

And now the time has also come when I may ask myself, relieved: what can you do further? I hope to be able to let you know, in a not too distant future, the answer upon which I have decided.

I have been filled with joy of late by certain signs which assure me that today the calls for liberty in Germany do no longer die away almost wholly without effect, as was still the case a year ago. The "Socialist law," under which not alone the party of the Social Democrats, but also the free thought and the free word suffered infinitely, has fallen. A discussion of questions until now prohibited has become possible. In the literary world, especially among the younger generation, there is noticeable a powerful current in the direction of Individualism. Based on the second edition of "Sturm," various periodicals have been discussing Stirner's philosophy and my position of Anarchism. There is no doubt that my new work will give rise to further and more thorough discussions.

As yet, I know no one here who, like ourselves, has followed the paths of Stirner and Proudhon to the end. Without a recruiting drum, without a watchword, without a programme, alone and without any sympathizers, I am standing as you were standing when with "Liberty" you founded the first organ of individualistic Anarchism in the new world. But, no! You had no one who could be to you what you have been and are to me: a living example of a pitiless contemplation of men and things, of a cool reckoner with sentimentality and brutality; and a friend.

Notwithstanding the perhaps long pause, I have not been sleeping. I have shaken off the dull stupor which sometimes overcame me when I here beheld everything after which I was striving apparently crushed under the clumsy heel of power, and the still more clumsy tyranny of a party claiming a lease on the future. There are as yet only a few on whom we may rely. But these few will also be found here, and meet in fellowship. For they are already here without knowing it themselves.

Long live Anarchy in the new as in the old world!

Very sincerely yours,

JOHN HENRY MACKAY.

ZURICH, SWITZERLAND, JANUARY 19, 1891.

Mr. Hanson Enters the Lists.

To the Editor of Liberty:

The question of copyright, which has been so elaborately discussed in the pages of Liberty, is, to my mind, one of the simplest of economic problems.

Ideas are things that cannot be smelled, tasted, seen, heard, or felt. As they exist exclusively in the brain, they are non-transferable. All economic quantities must be put into concrete form to make them exchangeable, for economics is the science of exchange.

What, then, have we to consider, in the production of a book, that comes within the pale of economics? Only the amount of work in formulating the ideas into an objective reality. Beyond this we may not go. For things which the senses cannot cognize are not economic quantities. Hence the total amount of work in the production of a book — the objective thing — is all that the author can claim as property. Property consists of all labor-products and useful services that gratify human desires, and whose exchangeable value is determined by the amount of work and time required to produce them. All that an author can rightfully claim from the public is as much useful work, in one form or another, as he has put into his book. Equity, therefore, does not permit copyright or monopoly.

I do not invade an author's, or an inventor's right, by copying his book, or by making a similar machine. I have an inherent right to the use of my eyes, brains, and hands to copy a book, or imitate a machine. In doing either I rob neither the author nor the inventor, for my labor is my own. I have therefore a right to compete with the author, or inventor, in the same markets for the sale of my products. No one, under the law of equal freedom, can rightfully prohibit me from so doing.

Liberty, therefore, is in the right, notwithstanding it has such gladiators to combat as "Yarros, Simpson, Donisthorpe, Fuller, and Bilgram."

WM. HANSON.

Another Consistent Anti-Monopolist.

Friend Tucker:

I feel like thanking you for your persistent fight against numerical odds, on the patent, copyright, question. Would have offered my feeble lance (pen) to assist you; but that I saw it was occupying space to the exclusion from Liberty's usual bill of fare of much spicy and interesting matter. But comrade Lloyd comes gallantly to your side, and, it seems to me, to the utter rout of the opposing champions.

Your illustrations might be carried to any extent. If the inventor of the revolving millstone had perpetual property in his applied discovery, all the world would now be tributary to his posterity. The same would be true of the man who made the first application of clothing; so that indeed the right to do the slightest thing would depend, as Mr. Bilgram seems to imagine it now does, on getting someone's permission; and the man could do nothing till he had first obtained the assent of the one authorized by the collectivity to grant it. Some one might prove that it was his ancestor who had first *drawn* breath, and so no one be allowed the right to imitate him, without paying a *royalty*.

I think an author who made authorship a profession would be compensated for the extensive free publication of his earlier works by the increased demand for future contributions from his pen, and which he would be able to hold as private property, until his publishers, or the general public, had agreed to pay his price for them. Doubtless the unlicensed publication of Spencer's "Social Statics," in this country, accounts, in a degree, for the extent to which his partially authorized editions of later works have here been circulated and read.

The author has always the power to enforce his normal right of ownership by requiring that his book be published by *subscription*, a method which is still resorted to under legal copyright.

Anent the "Mutual Bank"; I hope to be able to understand it, when it is put in operation; but am unable now to see how credit based on a legalized monopoly can benefit such as have no interest in the monopoly or save them from rent, tariff, and patent right tax. Yes! I *know* you meant the single-tax men; but some might think you classed all land reformers together. Really, I think the mutual bank would be likely to remove land monopoly sooner than George's tax.

J. K. INGALLS.

GLENORA, N. Y., FEBRUARY 12, 1891.

Ready to Fight.

[Wordsworth Donisthorpe in Herald of Anarchy.]

There is too much gas. What we want is a *League of Action*. By this I do not mean a ridiculous aggressive Society of revolutionists throwing bombs about. I mean a Defence League which shall have the courage of its convictions to the full length of resisting *by force* all aggressive acts perpetrated by the State.

It should consist of a Council who should consider how far resistance should be carried under whatever circumstances might arise; and what sort of resistance should be made.

Thus, although I think it would be a perfectly moral act to shoot an official charged with the carrying out of the German Compulsory Vaccination Law, I think it would be folly to go to the same length in resisting the English law. First of all, it is hardly right to kill a man for picking your pocket. Knock his front teeth out, but do not kill him. Secondly, it is a bad example to those who claim rights which free men cannot admit, — *e. g.*, the right to live, if need be, at other people's expense; and which claim they may put forward with every bit as much zeal and conviction of justice as that with which we assert our right to liberty.

I advocate forcible resistance to arbitrary interference; but moderate and suitable resistance, such as I would myself exercise against private individuals in a fray.

Surely there is plenty to be done without going mad and twaddling about dynamite. Take the Free Libraries Rate. Let one hundred persons all stubbornly refuse to pay it in one district. Let them ignore the summons. Let the tax-collector obtain his warrant and levy for the amount. When the "man in possession" has effected his entrance and drawn his schedule of goods and chattels distrained, let him be promptly chucked into the nearest gutter. And finally when this results in the incarceration of the free man defending his liberty, let him sit it out in jail. Let his co-leaguers at the same time make themselves as unpleasant as they can to the majority by holding meetings, organizing angry processions, breaking the windows of public buildings, thrashing public officers (in reason), and otherwise making the majority heartily sick of the whole business.

Miss Willard's Defence.

To the Editor of Liberty:

In your issue of January 24 you quote from a contribution by E. Evans to the "National View" of Washington, in which he credits Miss Willard with having written the poem "For the People" under the title of "What We Want."

You will be glad, I am sure, to state to your readers that Miss Willard quoted this poem in her last annual address before the National W. C. T. U., having seen it published under the title, "What We Want," and Mr. Evans failed to notice the sentence with which she prefaced the quotation, as follows: "The present unrest is nobly translated in these words," proving conclusively that she did not claim the authorship.

Hoping you will do Miss Willard the justice to correct your statement, I am yours truly,

ANNA A. GORDON,
Private Secretary.

AUBURNDALE, MASS., JANUARY 31, 1891.

Defence of Miss Willard's Defender.

To the Editor of Liberty:

The extracts of a poem quoted by "a certain, or rather uncertain E. Evans," in an article in the "National View," as original from the pen of Miss Willard, seems to have disturbed your mind *muchly*. If the poem, as you state, was "written many years ago" for the "Independent," I was led into the error from the fact that the usual quotation marks were not used in the printed copy of Miss Willard's speech at Atlanta, Ga.

I am fully aware of the heinousness of the crime of attempting to plagiarize a Boston author, but, being a *National Reformer* and the supporter of a National Reform Party for 1892, I may appear in your conservative eyes as an "uncertain quantity," and not worthy of forgiveness. However, may I not hope for your clemency if I promise never again to misquote a Boston author?

Yours with great humility,

E. E. EVANS.

TONAWANDA, N. Y., FEBRUARY 3, 1891.

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BOSTON, MASS., FEBRUARY 21, 1891.

"In abolishing rent and interest, the last vestiges of old-time slavery, the Revolution abolishes at one stroke the sword of the executioner, the seal of the magistrate, the club of the policeman, the gauge of the exciseman, the erasing-knife of the department clerk, all those insignia of Politics, which young Liberty grinds beneath her heel." — PROUDHON.

☞ The appearance in the editorial column of articles over other signatures than the editor's initial indicates that the editor approves their central purpose and general tenor, though he does not hold himself responsible for every phrase or word. But the appearance in other parts of the paper of articles by the same or other writers by no means indicates that he disapproves them in any respect, such disposition of them being governed largely by motives of convenience.

The Right to Authorship.

Mr. Tucker's "disposition to narrow the (copyright) debate down to essentials" does not appear to prevent him from seizing upon all manner of non-essentials whenever he thinks he can strengthen his case thereby. While he insists that those of his opponents who have approached the matter of copy and patent right from the practical side shall meet him on the sole issue of the relation between property in ideas and the general principle of equal liberty; while he sharply calls to order Mr. Donisthorpe and Mr. Bilgram, reluctant to descend from the lofty position of a logical defender of a scientific principle and discuss with them practical results, — he takes care to keep all the practical questions constantly before *my* eyes, despite my entire willingness, and even anxiety, to confine the discussion to the single question whether or not property in ideas consists with the principle of equal liberty. It is quite painful for me to contemplate the awkwardness of Mr. Tucker's present attitude. In the same issue we find him telling Mr. Bilgram that his non-use of the law of equal liberty is laughable in the extreme, and telling *me* (without preceiving that he creates an opportunity for me to make merry at *his* expense) that the "fact" that "perpetual copyright warrants the wanton destruction of the most valuable treasures," etc., "is the final and triumphant *reductio ad absurdum* of all theories of perpetual property in ideas"! Is not Mr. Tucker's own use *and* non-use of the law of equal liberty laughable in the extreme? The "fact" referred to, to those who consistently adhere to the law of equal liberty, is of no significance whatever. The question, as Mr. Tucker told Mr. Donisthorpe, is not whether we fancy we should be losers or gainers by copyright. The question is, what is the verdict of social science on this point, what the conclusion authorized by the law of equal liberty. We should all perish if farmers and manufacturers suddenly took a notion to destroy all their products; yet it does not occur to us to use this fact as a triumphant argument against private property in wheat, clothing, and other indispensable things.

On the main issue Mr. Tucker makes but one remark, "which, weak as it is, I must not ignore." "As a friend of equal liberty," he cannot endure the man who, having produced a work of genius, claims the right of absolute property in that work. "It is," he cries, "an idle mockery to say that people would still have the liberty to discover for themselves. No man living in the civilized world has the liberty to discover the principle of the steam-engine. Having seen the steam-engine, he is powerless to discover it. This being the case, and the first inventor of the steam-engine having virtually rendered all other people powerless to invent it, a patent given to him puts the entire world at his mercy by enabling him to deprive it of its chief motive-power if he chooses, or, if he prefers, to sell it to the world at the price of a permanent income for himself and his heirs amounting to a fraction less than the annual extra product due to the use of steam." But Mr. Tucker strangely loses sight of one circumstance, — namely, that the inventor or discoverer does not force anybody to examine and study his invention or discovery. Certainly the author or inventor, in publishing his idea, violates no one's freedom. If Mr. Tucker wants to be the originator of everything he has occasion to use and enjoy in life, he is at liberty to abstain from reading and studying things. Then it will be no idle mockery to say that he will have the liberty to discover everything for himself. In stopping to read and study what others have written and produced, he voluntarily abandons his liberty to discover the things for himself. Some things, indeed, it is not necessary to study; to see them merely is enough. But all Mr. Tucker has the right to demand is that these things shall not be brought to his own private house and placed before his eyes. The stores and the streets are not his; and he has no right to say that they shall not be offered *there* for inspection and sale. If he chooses to enter the stores, or walk in the public street and look at the display of goods in the windows, he does so at the risk of depriving himself of the liberty of originating certain things. Not being compelled by the inventors and authors to enter stores, he cannot complain of the loss of liberty entailed by these visits.

Unless Mr. Tucker can overthrow this argument, I claim that the right to property in ideas is fully established. I claim that the position taken by me, by the editor of "Today," and, as I still think (in spite of what has been urged against my interpretation of him), by Spencer, on the question of the absolute right of the author to *his* idea, logically follows from the law of equal liberty. Perhaps I was wrong in intimating that the second claimant (I use the word in its ordinary, not legal, sense) should be required to prove his title; it may be that the "good old rule" of holding an accused innocent until proved an aggressor by those who impeach him needs no qualification. I am not ready to express any positive opinion on the question, and am willing to discuss it. But, whatever the answer to this purely practical question, the important admission which I am endeavoring to get from Mr. Tucker is that, provided we grant every man who claims to have originated a thing the liberty to compete with a previously recognized originator of a similar thing (if a jury decides in his favor), the law of equal liberty is not violated in requiring everybody who wishes to use an idea elaborated by another, saving himself the trouble of originating it, to pay for the use of it, to the author, the price set upon it by the latter. Whether such patents and copyrights are platonic affairs or not, concerns me little. The principle alone concerns me. At some future occasion I may undertake to show that these patents and copyrights are sufficiently virile and vigorous; at present, regard for the proprieties of abstract discussion forbids my imitating Mr. Tucker and Mr. Bilgram and obscuring the question by considerations of advantage or non-advantage.

V. Y.

When Proudhon wrote the concluding letter in his famous discussion with Bastiat on interest, he told his opponent that three-fourths of it was written in advance of his receipt of the rejoinder to his previous letter, so well did he know what that rejoinder would be. My present answer to Mr. Yarros was not written in advance, but I can truthfully say that, when I wrote my previous answer, I foresaw that he would make precisely the reply that he has made. It would have been more merciful, no doubt, to have then and there assumed what the reply would be, and, by answering it in advance, prevented him from making it. But by a certain perversity inhering in my nature, akin, I fear, to that which actuates a cat in toying with its prey, I was led to allow him to attempt the seeming avenue of escape that still remained, leaving him to find out later that he had plunged into a *cul-de-sac*.

I foresaw, for instance, when I wrote my answers in the last issue to Mr. Yarros and Mr. Bilgram, that Mr. Yarros would seize upon the surface similarity between my *reductio ad absurdum* of property in ideas and Mr. Bilgram's attempted *reductio ad absurdum* of no-property in ideas, and "make merry" over my seeming inconsistency in objecting to this method of argument in the latter case while adopting it myself in the former. But I remembered that he laughs best who laughs last, and I cannot suppress a gentle chuckle over the innocent air of triumph with which Mr. Yarros has walked into the trap. Let us now take a look at the essential difference underlying this surface similarity. If Mr. Yarros had read my answer to Mr. Bilgram more carefully, he would have seen that I never asserted for a moment that, if Mr. Bilgram's claim that a denial of property in ideas would leave us without a literature should be thoroughly established, the fact would not therefore prove either that such property is consistent with equal liberty or else that equal liberty does not always make for happiness and is a much less reliable guide than we now suppose. My objection to Mr. Bilgram was that he refused to consider, on the ground of irrelevancy, the theoretical argument that property in ideas is inconsistent with equal liberty, but instead, without pointing out any flaw in this argument, insisted that it must be unsound because in his opinion, unsubstantiated by any facts, and even against the facts, and against the opinion of most students, denial of property in ideas would destroy literature. Now, was my *reductio ad absurdum* of property in ideas anything of this nature? Not at all. I cited as a possible result of absolute and perpetual property in ideas the destruction of Spencer's works for all time by the descent of the copyright to a bigoted Roman Catholic heir. This possibility is not a doubtful matter. It is undenied and undeniable. In fact, any one who looks at the matter without bias will admit the strong probability that such a result would ensue sooner or later, if not in the case of Spencer's works, then in the cases of others equally important. And this being true, it shows property in ideas to be absurd, just as Mr. Bilgram's claim, *if it were true*, would show no-property in ideas to be absurd. If there were half the probability that all the farmers would simultaneously destroy all their wheat in exercise of their right of property that there would be of the permanent destruction of valuable literary works under a system of perpetual copyright, I am inclined to think that we should be very great fools if we continued to protect private property in wheat. Nevertheless, aside from the absolute silliness of the one supposition and the absolute reasonableness of the other, there is an important distinction that should be pointed out: the destruction of Spencer's works, accompanied, say, by a sale of the copyright to the Roman Church, would absolutely prohibit the reproduction of them, whereas the destruction of wheat by all existing farmers would not prevent other men from becoming farmers and producing more wheat. The necessary readjustment in the latter case would probably be accompanied by much suffering and perhaps by some deaths, but it is not true — in fact, it is far from true — that we should all perish. The evil, however intense, would be of a temporary character, whereas the evil, under perpetual copyright, of the destruction of great literary works would be permanent, ineradicable, irremediable.

Right here I may well call attention to the difference between Mr. Yarros's adherence to the law of equal liberty and my own. Judging from the tone of his present article, he seems to adhere to it as to a fetich; I adhere to it simply as a means of happiness. When I called Mr. Donisthorpe and Mr. Bilgram to order, I did so on the supposition that both those gentlemen had arrived at the conclusion that equal liberty makes for happiness. Hence I reasoned that the shortest way for us to decide the copyright question was to decide first whether copyright harmonizes with equal liberty, instead of betaking ourselves to an empirical examination of facts and figures, in neglect of the advantage which our common generalization gives us. But nowhere have I disputed the ultimate appeal to facts to overthrow even the supposed law of equal liberty. Mr. Yarros, on the contrary, seems to have a regard for abstract reasoning which prohibits him from allowing any such court of ultimate appeal. It is only fair to say, however, that this fetichism is not shown by him in dealing with other questions. In his treatment of the land question, for instance, it is conspicuously absent. If any one were to prove to him that the law of equal liberty requires that all users of any part of the American continent should pay rent to the heirs of its discoverer, Christopher Columbus, he would say: "To hell with the law of equal liberty!" or words to that effect; but when this same law seems to him to require that all users of the steam-engine should pay a royalty to the heirs of its discoverer, James Watt, he apparently is as ready to grant this law a permanent abode in heaven as he would be in the former case to consign it to the nether regions. At least, I can gather nothing else from his criticism of my use of the *reductio ad absurdum*.

Mr. Yarros seems to be under an impression that I have tried to exclude the practical side of this discussion, and am therefore violating my own rule when I take up that side in any way. Again he has read carelessly. I have not tried to exclude the practical side. I have simply insisted on the inclusion of the theoretical side, and that, with those who accept the law of equal liberty on utilitarian grounds, the decision must turn on the theoretical argument. That I did not wish to exclude practical discussion is shown by the fact that, after protesting against the seeming attempts of Mr. Bilgram and Mr. Donisthorpe to ex-

clude discussion of the general principle, I then proceeded to meet the practical considerations urged by both of those gentlemen. I have adopted no rule, therefore, that forbids me to keep the practical questions before Mr. Yarros's eyes. If the view displeases him, that is not my fault. Besides, to adopt his own argument, he is not obliged to look at it.

This reminds me of that other part of Mr. Yarros's rejoinder which I also clearly foresaw. When I argued that the publication of an invention practically takes away from all other men the liberty to invent the same thing for themselves, I knew, almost as well as I know it now, that Mr. Yarros would answer: "Let them shut their eyes, then, or stay in the house. They are not obliged to read about, study, or look at the new invention. But if they do so read, study, and look, they voluntarily abandon their liberty to invent the same thing themselves." It is plausible, but let us once more look below the surface. Then we see at once that the voluntary abandonment is all on the other side. Here we are, all of us, with equal rights to shut our eyes or open them, to stay at home or walk the streets, and to exercise our native faculties. This is the normal condition, the *status quo*. Some man comes along with an invention and parades it in the streets; and we are told that, in consequence of this act on his part, we must either give up our liberty to walk the streets or else our liberty to invent the thing that he has invented! Not so fast, my dear sir. The boot is on the other leg. Were you compelled to parade your invention through the streets? Were you even invited to do so? No! Then why do you do it? And why do you ask us to protect you from the consequences? You want your invention to yourself? Then keep it to yourself. Nobody says you nay. But when you parade it in the streets, you voluntarily abandon your liberty to keep it to yourself. And if you, denying this, ask us to aid you in depriving us of our birthright in the facts and truths of nature, we admire your assurance, but we do not bow to your will. Thus the very argument by which Mr. Yarros endeavored to escape is turned against himself and pens him in the closer. He thought he had struck the open road, and he finds himself in a blind alley.

T.

The Question of Copyright.—I

I have read with interest what has appeared in Liberty on this subject,—no doubt a puzzling one, because both abstract and complex. What is copyright? The word means the right to copy. But if I say I am in favor of copying what we want to copy, the advocates of copyright will immediately tell me that this is precisely what they do not allow, except to the author or his assigns. The word and the law are derived from a political condition in which the sovereign prohibited individual activities in general, then relaxed the prohibition in favor of certain persons. This theory of despotic power and gracious indulgence is the foundation of the patent system. The author is one of the class of inventors, otherwise discoverers. Whether he had to labor to any appreciable extent or whether his discovery, his prose or poetry, flashed from his genius, makes no difference in his standing as regards his legal right.

Starting from the Egoistic point of view, I of course have no respect for his right as his right. Is it convenient to me in the long run? By a process of reasoning and some inherited qualities I perceive, and it is agreeable to me to feel, that men may be approximately equal in industrial relations with mutual benefit. Thus I am disposed to allow to others the possession of their labor products if they will allow mine to me. But I make no sacred dogma of this, and it has to be qualified in accordance with my reason for allowing it. Thus, for example, if my neighbor takes a notion to make a garden upon the ground devoted to a road, I shall consult my own convenience about driving across his garden.

I not only allow to others their labor products, but also a reasonable amount of material on which to work, and all material in which they have embodied their labor without trespass. Both these kinds of property I cheerfully recognize, as being inseparable. Here I am disposed to stop. Show me that any other property is reasonable and can be maintained without government; then I may acknowledge it.

Literary and patent-right property, as I know it, is another name for prohibition. It prohibits an exercise of one's imitative and laboring faculties. It is true that I will join with my neighbor B to prevent C from taking B's farm or his statue or his house, and I expect general consent. Why? Because men in general can make use of land for farms, and can enjoy property in the other mentioned forms. It is not especially because he chiseled the statue or built the house, but because it came into his possession in a manner which I recognize as lawful, perhaps by exchange. There appears to be enough raw material for all to have work and consequent comfort. All men can find use for a piece of land; hence, when men become more intelligent, they will see their interest in defending the occupier. But how many out of a thousand are capable of availing themselves of copyright and patent laws to make more than they can make by disregarding such laws?

All men have labor products limited by the material in which the labor is embodied, and hence transferable. A copyright-privilege or patent-right privilege awaits embodiment in other material, and the author or inventor, if protected, can but levy toll upon those who will embody it in imitation of him.

I see that it is proposed, in putting together the scattered provisions of the British copyright law, to include abridgments. Then there is the right of translation. Plagiarism is a delicate point in many cases. I think it must be very difficult to contrive any plan of protecting copyright which will not either leave a loophole for plagiarism or involve government, and that such would be the case were all disposed to admit the doctrine of copyright.

As a matter of comity, I think publishers could well come to agreements not to duplicate each other's work, but an indispensable condition among free men must be that authors and their publishers shall not enjoy the prohibitory privilege which is the soul of copyright.

Besides indorsing Mr. Tucker's argument in reply to Mr. Donisthorpe, I wish to add a few words on the inventions which have been abandoned to the public, not superseded. Let us suppose that perpetual patent and copyright had existed from the beginning of civilization, and that all inventors had claimed their "rights." In that case there would be royalties on the wheel, the saw, the knife, the axe, the plough, the use of iron, the processes in every manufacture, on all games, on money, on paper, on fire, on matches, on window glass, on doors and hinges, on springs, on locks, on beds, on soap and the use of soap, on hot water, on brushes, on every kind of clothes and shoes, on ink, types and every press, on the musical notation, on books, on the alphabet, on the numerals, on arithmetic, on bookkeeping by single and double entry. What would business men do without figures? They must pay the descendant of some Arabian. What would engineers do without algebra? They, too, must pay. Everybody must pay for having a name and surname. What would composers do without a staff and notes, or authors without an alphabet? They could not claim any copyright, for they are using signs invented by a monk. The Church, being his heir, might farm letters out. But it, in turn, must get the permission of the owners of the processes of paper-making, printing, and bookbinding. The whole system, besides, would require more functionaries than Proudhon enumerated to bedevil the mass of mankind. Can that be social science which would result in slavery to privilege but for the abandonments and invasions before social science was thought of?

Mr. Simpson's proposition of control over another by virtue of having adorned his piece of land, and the other's wanting to imitate his adornment, will do very well. I shall imitate Mr. Simpson's adornment and make no pretence of originality or coincidence. In order to fine me, he will have to come with force upon my piece of land. I shall talk to the neighbors about it, and endeavor to show them how the balance of exchange is affected if we do not receive labor equivalents, but are forced to pay for looking at objects publicly exposed. Mr. Simpson will then proceed to enforce his claim, perhaps. While he is doing so, I may have the luck to discover in the property of somebody else the natural object which gave him his design, and then there will be an unlimited claim against Mr. Simpson.

I have some further remarks to make touching on Spencer and Yarros.

TAK KAK.

Ideas and Cigars.

Will Mr. Tucker kindly answer the following questions:

(1) If the making of a cigar is work, and its results—the cigar—is justly the private property of the worker, why is not the writing a novel work, and its result—the novel—the private property of its author?

(2) Where is a greater variety and a more pronounced individualness to be found? in a circulating library containing a hundred thousand volumes, or in a tobacco factory containing a hundred thousand cigars? In other words, are the possibilities of reproduction in the case of cigars greater or less than they are in the case of—say, "What's to be Done?" or "What is Property?" or "The Origin of Species"? Now, if the cigar made by *A* is his private property in spite of the dear public's claim of all the vast possibilities it has to produce a cigar just like it, why should not *A*'s "System of Economical Contradictions" or a novel written by him be his private property as well? the more so as there is good reason to believe that such works as "What is Property?" or "What's to be Done?" do not as easily meet the demand for them as do cigars.

(3) If you, Mr. Tucker, think it just that there should be no "property in the results of work that is or may be done once for all," why do you consider the cigars in your pocket your private property? or do you believe that these cigars are not the result of work that was done once for all? or do you think they need being done over again before they can become your private property? or do you believe there is some such power in the whole universe, which can supply us with the slightest shadow of a possibility to make these same identical cigars which are at this moment in your pocket anew?

(4) Has a man a right to copy my letters? If not, has he a right to copy my manuscript?

(5) Has a man a right to copy letters sent to me by my friend? If not, has he a right to copy his manuscript sent to me in the form of a letter or letters?

(6) If not, may I not—having the permission of my friend—make with any *willing* individual an agreement to the effect that for a consideration of so much and so much, payable to me in cash, he shall have the right to read that manuscript whenever he pleases, provided that he shall at no time copy it behind my back? Would such a transaction, if consummated, be unjustifiable from the point of view of the law of equal freedom?

(7) If not, may not the same transaction be repeated with a hundred thousand individuals?

(8) If it may be so repeated, may I not prepare beforehand a hundred thousand copies of that manuscript, and send them right along to those individuals as they write to me of their willingness to accept my proposition, instead of making them waste shoe leather in coming over to my rooms there to read the manuscript? If not, why not?

(9) If yes, may we not, once for all, to economize effort, make an agreement all around, and call it a free social compact, to the effect that those wishing to read a manuscript or a copy of it, or possess themselves of such manuscript or copy of it, or take unto themselves such manuscript or copy of it as their anarchistically lawful private property may do so only by special permission of the maker of the manuscript or his authorized agent? If not, why not?

(10) If yes, why not extend the same copy right to scientific discoveries and mechanical inventions?

M. ZAMÉTKIN.

19 WILLARD STREET, BOSTON, MASS.

(1) Because the principle of property being the exclusive control by each individual of the results of his exploitation of nature so far as he may have it without impairing the equal right and opportunity of every other individual to similarly exploit nature, the ownership of cigars harmonizes with this principle, since it does not exclude others from making and owning similar cigars, whereas the ownership of novels (meaning not the material book, but the collocation of words) conflicts with this principle, since it excludes others from making and owning novels like them.

(2) After due consideration, I give this question up; am unable to understand its meaning or its bearing.

(3) Mr. Zamétkin has failed to grasp the idea intended to be conveyed by the words "work done once for all," although it has been clearly explained. If he will turn back to my quotation from Mr. George in Liberty, No. 174, he will find these words: "The

work of discovery may be done once for all as in the case of the discovery in prehistoric time of the principle or idea of the wheelbarrow. But the work of production is required afresh in the case of each particular thing. No matter how many thousand millions of wheelbarrows have been produced, it requires fresh labor of production to make another one." Mr. Zamétkin will find further that I, in commenting on this, wrote as follows: "Can anything be plainer than that he who does the work of combining words for the expression of an idea saves just that amount of labor to all who thereafter choose to use the same words in the same order to express the same idea, and that this work, not being required afresh in each particular case, is not work of production, and that, not being work of production, it gives no right of property. In quoting Mr. George above I did not have to expend any labor on 'how to say' what he had already said. He had saved me that trouble. I simply had to write and print the words on fresh sheets of paper. These sheets of paper belong to me, just as the sheets on which he wrote and printed belong to him. But the particular combination of words belongs to neither of us." By applying this argument to cigars, Mr. Zamétkin will see that the discovery of the idea involved in the making of a cigar was work that was done once for all, and does not have to be done afresh every time a new cigar is made, while the actual rolling of the tobacco has to be repeated with each new cigar. I am afraid that Mr. Zamétkin has not followed the present discussion from the beginning. In that case he was not justified in stepping into it and making me waste space in repetition. If he had read the whole discussion, I do not think he could have asked a question so ludicrously foolish.

(4) No man has a right to copy Mr. Zamétkin's letters or manuscript without his permission, unless he makes them public.

(5) Same answer as to previous question.

(6) Perfectly justifiable.

(7) Yes, Mr. Zamétkin may make a hundred thousand contracts of this sort, if he chooses to take the risk. But we, the people, if we are sensible and understand politics and economy, will no more undertake to protect Mr. Zamétkin's privacy while he is doing his level best to make his privacy indistinguishable from publicity than an insurance company will undertake to insure his house if he insists on filling every nook and corner of it with gunpowder, dynamite, nitroglycerine, kerosene, benzine, naphtha, and matches, in close proximity.

(8) Yes, again; but again I add that the people would no more protect Mr. Zamétkin's privacy under such circumstances than they would protect his property if he should convert the whole of it into gold dollars and scatter them broadcast through the streets. In the latter case his conduct would be rightly regarded as a voluntary abandonment of his property; in the former case it would be rightly regarded as a voluntary abandonment of his privacy. Or else, in both cases he himself would be regarded as a lunatic and a fit subject for guardianship.

(9) and (10) The answer to the eighth question makes answers to the ninth and tenth superfluous.

T.

Socialism and Liberty.

To the Editor of Liberty:

An Anarchist paper defines an Individualist to be "one who believes in the principle of recognizing the right of every non-aggressive individual to the full control of his person and property." Is this the meaning of the word as you understand it? If so, and if it is correct, Individualism and Socialism are reconcilable, since the aim of the latter is the obtainment of the condition sought by the former. Though the methods of Socialists may conflict in effect with the principle of Individualism, they accord with it fundamentally, do they not? From all the works I can find on modern Socialism, or Nationalism, I understand its object to be the protection of each individual in the privilege of enjoying his rights, — *i. e.*, to form a condition whereby equal freedom may be enjoyed, by forbidding the invasion, and all acts of men which affect to a disadvantage, directly or indirectly, the person or property of any non-aggressive individual. The means proposed by Socialists may fail in effect to form such a condition, but still a Socialist may be an Individualist. I understand how the nationalization of industries may stop the invasion of the greedy monopolists of interest, unfair profits, and rents, but I have never learned from Liberty or any other champion of Anarchism how the same could invade the liberty of any individual but the aggressive and the tyrannical. The protection of the weak and innocent against the strong and avaricious necessarily involves compulsion, whether by the will of the people as typified by a system of democratic government or by their will as idealized by Anarchists. A defence of a crime involves compulsion of some sort, whether the force of a superstitious law or the power of popular Anarchy. How, then, does Anarchism conflict with Socialism or Individualism as above defined?

Yours, WILLIS HUDSPETH.

ATLANTIC, IOWA, FEBRUARY 11, 1891.

The definition offered of Individualism might not be accepted by all Individualists, but it will do very well as a definition of Anarchism. When my correspondent speaks of Socialism, I understand him to mean State Socialism and Nationalism, and not that Anarchistic Socialism which Liberty represents. I shall answer him on this supposition. He wishes to know, then, how State Socialism and Nationalism would restrict the non-aggressive individual in the full control of his person and property. In a thousand and one ways. I will tell him one, and leave him to find out the thousand. The principal plank in the platform of State Socialism and Nationalism is the confiscation of *all* capital by the State. What becomes, in that case, of the property of any individual, whether he be aggressive or non-aggressive? What becomes also of private industry? Evidently it is totally destroyed. What becomes then of the personal liberty of those non-aggressive individuals who are thus prevented from carrying on business for themselves or from assuming relations between themselves as employer and employee if they prefer, and who are obliged to become employees of the State against their will? State Socialism and Nationalism mean the utter destruction of human liberty and private property.

T.

Nationalists and the Social Organism.

When that "scientific Socialist, T. B. Wakeman, desires to be *very* scientific, and to overwhelm an Individualistic opponent completely, he trots out the imposing phase, "Society is an organism." Of course, if society is an organism, then the individual is merely a poor cell, and for the cell to clamor for freedom, rights, and respectful treatment is not only treasonable, but ridiculous. The "scientific Socialist," after delivering himself of this solid argument, assures his opponent that nothing but his profound ignorance of the implications of that great sociological formula accounts for his perversity and his opposition to the system of "universal coöperation."

The truth is, however, that the State Socialist champion himself is ignorant of the real import and significance of the proposition he is repeating after scientific men in full confidence that it tells in his favor. Examination soon reveals his amusing blunder. It is well for the effusive and brainless Nationalist orator that he never undertakes such an examination. Even a *little* knowledge would indeed be dangerous in his case. But we who wish to counteract the effect of Nationalistic grandiloquence upon the auditors must always be ready to expose his poverty and his clumsiness.

Nobody has better stated and elucidated the real relations of social organizations to individual organisms than Spencer, and a study of his position leaves us in no suspense or uncertainty in regard to the proper way of dealing with the pretensions of the Nationalists. Referring the reader to Spencer's essay on "The Social Organism," I wish to reproduce here his succinct statement of the points of similarity and the points of difference between these two orders of organisms, with the view of furnishing the Anarchistic opponents of Nationalist notions a ready weapon for use in debate. Spencer writes:

Societies agree with individual organisms in four conspicuous peculiarities: —

1. That commencing as small aggregations, they insensibly augment in mass: some of them eventually reaching ten thousand times what they originally were.

2. That while at first so simple in structure as to be considered structureless, they assume, in the course of their growth, a continually-increasing complexity of structure.

3. That though in their early, undeveloped states, there exists in them scarcely any mutual dependence of parts, their parts gradually acquire a mutual dependence; which becomes at last so great, that the activity and life of each part is made possible only by the activity and life of the rest.

4. That the life and development of a society is independent of, and far more prolonged than, the life and development of any of its component units; who are severally born, grow, work, reproduce, and die, while the body politic composed of them survives generation after generation, increasing in mass, completeness of structure, and functional activity.

And "on the other hand," says Spencer, "the leading differences between societies and individual organisms are these":

1. That societies have no specific external forms.

2. That though the living tissue whereof an individual organism consists, forms a continuous mass, the living elements of a society do not form a continuous mass; but are more or less widely dispersed over some portion of the earth's surface.

3. That while the ultimate living elements of an individual organism, are mostly fixed in their relative positions, those of the social organism are capable of moving from place to place.

4. The last and perhaps the most important distinction, is, that while in the body of an animal, only a special tissue is endowed with feeling; in a society, all the members are endowed with feeling.

This last distinction Mr. Spencer admonishes us to keep constantly in view. "For it reminds us that while in individual bodies, the welfare of all other parts is rightly subservient to the welfare of the nervous system, whose pleasurable or painful activities make up the good or evil of life; in bodies politic, the same thing does not hold, or holds to but a very slight extent. It is well that the lives of all parts of an animal should be merged in the life of the whole; because the whole has a corporate consciousness capable of happiness or misery. But it is not so with a society; since its living units do not and cannot lose individual consciousness; and since the community as a whole has no corporate consciousness. And this is an everlasting reason why the welfare of citizens cannot rightly be sacrificed to some supposed benefit of the State; but why, on the other hand, the State is to be maintained solely for the benefit of citizens. The corporate life must here be subservient to the lives of the parts; instead of the lives of the parts being subservient to the corporate life."

And now that I have enlightened the Nationalist on the subject of the social organism, how much of his new information can he exploit in the interest of his cause? Not a particle. On the other hand, the last distinction is clearly very damaging to his central doctrine. It is not at all absurd and treasonable for the "cells" to clamor for individual liberty and rights; it is the "cells" alone that possess any rights. The question is not between the "cell" and "society," but between one cell and another cell, or between conflicting groups of cells; and the ignoramus is not he who discusses the question of individual rights, but he who dismisses that question as nonsensical and who demands implicit obedience to the commands of "society."

V. Y.

The Week-Day View and the Sunday View.

The "Chicagoer Arbeiterzeitung," under the editorship of Moritz Schultze, published the following announcement in its issue of February 12:

Victor Yarros, a co-editor of Liberty in Boston, will speak next Sunday evening at 8 o'clock in Recital Hall of the Auditorium on the subject: "Views of an Anarchist Concerning the Social Question," to be followed by a discussion.

The speaker was invited to Chicago by the managers of the so-called "Economic Conferences between Business Men and Laborers," a club consisting chiefly of rich business men to whom it is amusing to occupy themselves with social questions in their leisure hours. His position may be described as "petty bourgeois-individualistic-anarchistic." He will not hurt Messrs. Lyman J. Gage & Co., the prominent members of the club, — but they don't want that, either.

The pretentious boorishness of the foregoing paragraph could not easily be excelled. The wanton fling at the members of the "Economic Conferences" is

surely without any excuse, while the sneer at Mr. Yarros is simply beneath contempt. If it is true that *le style c'est l'homme*, the editor of the "Arbeiterzeitung" has succeeded in making himself out an unmitigated boor.

Something like this must have been felt by my old friend Bechtold, for he administered a most delicate and effective rebuke to his "superior" by republishing his announcement in the "Fackel" of February 15, the Sunday edition of the "Arbeiterzeitung," with the boorishness left out, thus:

Victor Yarros, a co-editor of Liberty in Boston, will speak this evening at 8 o'clock in Recital Hall of the Auditorium on the subject: "Views of an Anarchist Concerning the Social Question," to be followed by a discussion.

The speaker was invited by the managers of the "Economic Conferences between Business Men and Laborers" to deliver this lecture in Chicago. Mr. Yarros is an Anarchist of the Boston school, and is favorably known in the whole country through Liberty. We recommend all who are in earnest with the study of the social question and who are inclined to view it from different standpoints to attend this meeting. Mr. Yarros is one of the talented agitators of whom one can still learn something, if it were only to become acquainted with the flaws in the various systems.

G. S.

Hare and Tortoise.

Mr. Simpson has allowed himself to be caught by a sophist's trick, since he believes that logicians have failed to disprove the logical impossibility of a hare overtaking a tortoise if the tortoise gets a slight start. Given the number of yards constituting the start, the speed of the hare, and the speed of the tortoise, there can be no trouble in demonstrating how soon the hare will overtake the tortoise; but, if I might impose the condition under which the demonstration shall be made, I could contrive so that Mr. Simpson should never be able to reach the conclusion. The sophist's trick referred to is to contemplate the hare going half the distance given as a start, while the tortoise goes a shorter distance; then half the remainder; then half that still remains, and so on, thus consuming time and refusing to deal with the whole problem. To prevent the demonstration of any proposition, it would only be necessary to require that the demonstrator shall consume a minute in writing the first word, two minutes in writing the second word, and so on, until years would elapse, and he would die before he could get to the conclusion.

TAK KAK.

Anarchy's Starry Evidence.

The following is taken from a "seer's" description of the people inhabiting the planet Mars:

"These people are not governed by arbitrary laws, and are free from the inequalities and imperfections which are the natural results of such laws. The basis of all action consists in the interest-principle, which is recognized, tending to good results."

Judging from the foregoing, these people (if existing) are Egoistic Anarchists.

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